

The early tales of captain morgan

[Literature](#), [Biography](#)



Henry Morgan was born in Llanrhymney in Glamorganshire, now known as Welsh England, in 1635. (Carse 146) “ Although there is no mention of Morgan in historical record until 1665, it is generally accepted that Morgan came to Jamaica in 1658. ” (Schofield) He was the oldest son of Robert Morgan, who was a prosperous farmer. He came from a famous family of professional soldiers. Carse states on page 146 that, “ Schooling was no more for him than Hawkins or Drake. ” Morgan had two uncles one was a colonel before him in the islands. Morgan knew that a life on the farm was not for him so he signed on a boat to head for Barbados.

He was initially enlisted as an indentured servant to an English farmer but after working off his debt he continued on. Making his way over to Jamaica. Morgan enlisted as a common soldier at the age of twenty-one and served in two expeditions under Admiral Venables. While at Jamaica many officers died of fever and other sicknesses. Because Morgan’s uncle was a colonel he was able to push him along. Sending him on many missions against the Spanish. Morgan began to profit immensely from looting these Spanish ships. He also learned about the acts of guerrilla warfare from the buccaneers recruited for the English force.

He raided Santiago in Cuba as a member of the same crew. (Carse 146-147) After seven years of service in 1664 he was given command of a small privateer vessel. After acquiring his own ship he made his way down the coast of Campeche becoming a successful Buccaneer plundering and looting Spanish posts and ships. By the age of thirty he was ready for important command and offers were made towards him. But at this time in his life he was ready to get married. He married his cousin heir to his father’s ancestral

estate of Llanrhymney. Mary Elizabeth was the second daughter of Edward Morgan.

That marriage was short lived, as Morgan grew restless, when Edward Mansfield requested that Morgan join him as Vice-Admiral of his fleet on their raid of the main land. In 1668, Edward Mansfield commanded a fleet of fifteen ships and a crew consisting of 500 English and French men. (Allen) They first landed on the island of St. Catalina, also known as Providence Island. The Buccaneers forced the Spanish into submission all the fortifications on the island. Edward Mansfield intended to use the island as a stockpile and a common refuge for him men.

Mansfield requested that some of the Spanish forts be destroyed and the other forts to be further fortified. Mansfield left the island leaving one hundred of his men in control of the island and the inhabiting slaves that were formerly under the Spanish control. (Carse 152) Later on after Mansfield's death Morgan continued to fortify Providence Island intending to use it as a refuge as well as a meeting place for his comrades and fellow buccaneers. But the island was later lost again to the Spaniards. (Lane 127)

Tortuga is also another pirate and buccaneer get away and hang out. (Barbour: 538) With the aim to create a fleet of Buccaneers of his own he equipped a ship and sent word to his fellow comrades to meet up in the south Cays of Cuba. This was a great place to choose to meet up because it was in the center of the islands of the Caribbean and there were many coves and islands that were perfect to hide from storms and enemies. (Carse 105)

By after two months Morgan had assembled a fleet of twelve vessels and seven hundred crewmen consisting of both English and French men.

The buccaneers began to plunder around until the decision was made to attack Puerto del Principe. Lane 129-130) Puerto del Principe is a city in Costa Rica it was the strongest city, other than Havana and Cartagena which was under Spanish control at the time. There were two forts standing at the bay's entrance each was heavily guarded. One of the Spanish prisoners overheard the plan of the attack by the buccaneers, because he knew some English, and was able to escape and make it to Puerto del Principe by swimming from island to island till he reached the mainland in time to warn the governor and locals to hide all their goods.

The governor of the city was able to muster about eight hundred men as well as place blockades around the roads. They were still no match for the Buccaneers who took to the woods marching forward decimating anything in their path. The locals gave over the island after their governor was killed. All the prisoners were rounded up and locked into the jail. The following days the buccaneers pillaged and feasted on the towns goods while the prisoners famished. (Carse 107-116)

They acquired five hundred cattle to be salted and 50, 000 pieces of eight some silver and other goods, which was nowhere near the amount that they were expecting. Exquemelin 1976: 134) It was at this time that the French men in Morgan's crew parted ways with him. After the French had left Morgan rallied his men with nine ships and four hundred sixty men left in his fleet they set sail to attack Puerto Bello by night. (Carse 111) Captain

Morgan said to his men, " The fewer we are the better shares we shall have in the spoils. " (Exquemelin 1998: 146) Morgan realized that if he were going to attack by ship and attempt to take the land by sea the forts in the port would destroy his nine ships.

So he decided to set his ships a few miles away and attack as a soldier on land. His next issue was to land his crew in a way that would not capture any attention from the Spanish forces and raise the alarm. Morgan rowed twenty-three canoes ashore and proceeded to attack an outpost without having to fire a shot in an effort to remain invisible to the Spanish forces. (Pope: 147-148) The attack on Puerto Bello lasted through the night and into the morning. The battle led to many casualties, Morgan began to doubt leading his men into this bold battle.

But when the first fort was taken over the groups moral was boosted and the fighting continued. Morgan requested for the surrender of the fort, but the governor replied that it is better to die a fighting man than to be hung. And that is exactly how his life ended and the fort was captured. By this time Morgan's ships had moved into the harbor. Upon the capture of the city he ransomed the prisoners. " Demanding and receiving 100, 000 pieces of eight in exchange for not burning the city to the ground. (Minster)

The two men sent out to collect the money went to the president of Panama who summoned forces to come and help defend the post. Morgan got word of this and sent one hundred of his buccaneers out to defend a tight passage that the presidents army was going to pass through. Morgan's men were able to push back the enemy forces long enough to retreat back and get

word to him of their arrival. (Carse: 110-118) The president then proceeded to threaten Morgan and his men to leave. Morgan knew that if he needed to he could leave at a moments notice so he refused the threats.

At that time the president decided to back his forces off but also requested to see what weapon it was the Morgan was using that allowed him to wreak havoc on this town. Morgan presented the president with a French musket and allowed him to have it for a year or two until his return. The president responded by gifting Morgan with a golden ring encrusted with gems.

Morgan was able to plunder 215, 000 pieces of eight, jewels, silver, amongst many other goods and spoils. Morgan returned to Jamaica a very honored man. (Carse: 118-121) Sir Henry Morgan was one of the most revered buccaneers in history.

Morgan was known for making the greatest haul from Panama in 1670. (Stienback) From the city alone captured loot summing up to at least 1.5 million dollars in today's currency. (Exquemelin 1998: 58) Morgan and his crew pillaged in Panama for three weeks. (Lane: 121) When he sacked Puerto Bello on the Isthmus he got about \$800, 000. (Exquemelin 1998: 58) On March of 1669 Morgan hit Maracaibo with great plunders and riches found. (Lane: 117) Maracaibo and Gibraltar down along the coast of main he brought another \$400, 000.

A few more average take-overs and captures brought him another \$250, 000. Over the course of a few years he hauled in around \$3, 560, 000. Making Morgan and his fellow crewmembers very wealthy men. These are a few more examples of some of his other excursions that he succeeded in

through the years. (Exquemelin 1998: 58) While this paper focused mainly on only three of his expeditions and early life Sir Henry Morgan died on August 25, 1688. (NNBD) he had many other long excursions leading to tons of fame and fortune.